(d) Exploratory efforts for hydrocarbons in any area, including Tripura, are targeted both for oil and gas. However, Tripura and the adjoining areas of Bangladesh are gas prone, as proven from exploration results so far.

Agreement with Iraq in Oil Exploration

715. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Iraq has asked India for assistance and know-how for setting up a major oil refinery and also for oil exploration;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present status of its consideration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) During the 15th Session of the Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation of India and Iraq, held in Baghdad of 6th & 7th July, 2002, India agreed to consider the Iraq's proposal for setting up and investing in **a** new grass root refinery of 1,50,000 barrels per day (about 7.5 million metric tonnes per annum) capacity in Mosul area of Iraq.

As far as oil exploration activities are concerned, ONGC-Videsh Limited, a 100% subsidiary of Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), has signed an exploration and development contract with Oil Exploration Company of the Ministry of Oil, Iraq on 28.11.2000 for the exploration block-8 in the western desert of Iraq.

Investments in Oil Sector in Kazakhstan

716. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India propose to make major investments in the oil and gas sector in Kazakhstan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether major investments are to be made in four identified Caspian Sea oilfields in Kazakhstan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (d) ONGQ-